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CHAS. M. MEACHAM

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OUR SERVICE FLAG



THE DULL TOWN.

A country contributor, writing to the Indianapolis News, presents his idea of a dull town. He says:

"Whenever you get to the point where nobody shouts or fights, and where burnings are few and funerals plentiful and stylish, where the neighbors assiduously attend to their own business and take for granted you are doing the same, where there is a dead level or vulgar morality and men and women are either stolidly virtuous or openly loose in conduct, you have a dull town. And if you add to that a little pusillanimous penny-catching and penny-saving spirit, a barren hunting mania regarding the staples and necessities of life, an ill-natured and contemptible stolidness of 'economy' to the point of parsimony and open disregard for the business institutions of the town you are contented to live in, you are insured in a living dungeon of dullness into which I think the rays of God's sunshine never penetrate.

"You are so piously dull that when I see you standing in front of somebody's store gazing into space and occasionally exchanging some bit of gossip about the prices of things, with people equally sunk in the dull details of the objective life, shorn even of the 'gray' side of it, in which many move and have their being, I wonder where God is, that he lets you cumber the earth.

"But I suppose that when you see me leaning along to catch a train, or scratching in my inefficient garage, or wiping a tear off the end of my nose in church when it is borne in upon me that I'm a sinner saved by grace, you wonder where the fool killer is."

Plans for a super-cannon, a great gun of long range, possibly similar to the one with which the Germans have been bombarding Paris, have been submitted to Secretary Daniels by naval ordnance experts after months of experiment. It is understood, however, that the report includes a statement that the ordnance officers do not believe the military value of such a weapon will pay. It would only be useful for warfare on a civilian population in unprotected towns and this country is not in that line. Reports were heard in some quarters that a range of 105 miles was expected of the gun now under consideration.

Second Lieut. Byron Jackson, of the American aviation corps, was instantly killed at the Call field Monday afternoon when the machine in which he was flying crashed to earth, out of control, from a distance of 125 feet. A cadet who was with Lieut. Jackson was slightly injured. Lieutenant Jackson's home was in San Francisco.

One of the most costly attacks the enemy attempted Sunday was between Moriancourt and the Somme, where a heavy assault was made against the Australians shortly after midday. The attackers came forward in masses and the advancing lines were herded by the Germans were hurled back, leaving 3,000 dead.

Twenty-five casualties among the American expeditionary forces reported Monday were divided as follows: One killed in action; one died of wounds; four died of disease; two severely wounded and seventeen slightly wounded.

"Over the Top"

By An American Soldier
Who Went

ARTHUR GUY ENPEY
Machine Gunner Serving in France

(Copyright, 1917, by Arthur Guy Enpey)

When I came to I was crouching in a hole in No Man's Land. This shell hole was about three feet deep, so that it brought my head a few inches below the level of the ground. How I reached this hole I will never know. German "typewriters" were traversing back and forth in No Man's Land, the bullets biting the edge of my shell hole and throwing dirt all over me.

Overhead shrapnel was bursting. I could hear the fragments slap the ground. Then I went out once more. When I came to everything was silence and darkness in No Man's Land. I was soaked with blood and a big flap from the wound in my cheek was hanging over my mouth. The blood running from this flap choked me. Out of the corner of my mouth I would try and blow it back, but it would not move. I reached for my shell dressing and tried, with one hand, to bandage my face to prevent the flow. I had an awful horror of bleeding to death.

I was getting very faint. You would have laughed if you had seen my bulletheaded attempts at bandaging with one hand. The pains in my wounded shoulder were awful and I was getting sick at the stomach. I gave up the bandaging stunt as a bad job, and then fainted.

When I came to, hell was let loose. An intense bombardment was on, and on the whole my position was decidedly unpleasant. Then, suddenly, our barrage ceased. The silence almost hurt, but not for long, because Fritz turned loose with shrapnel, machine guns, and rifle fire. Then all along our line came a cheer and our boys came over the top in a charge. The first wave was composed of "Jocks." They were a marvellous sight, killing, flapping in the air, knees showing, and their bayonets glistening. In the first wave that passed my shell hole, one of the "Jocks," an immense fellow, about six feet two inches in height jumped right over me. On the right and left of me several soldiers in colored kilts were huddled on the ground, then over came the second wave, also "Jocks." One young Scot, when he came abreast of my shell hole, leaped into the air, his rifle shooting out of his hands, landing about six feet in front of him, bayonet first, and stuck in the ground, the butt trembling. This impressed me greatly.

Right now I can see the butt of that gun trembling. The Scot made a complete turn in the air, hit the ground, rolling over twice, each time clanking at the earth, and then remained still, about four feet from me, in a sort of sitting position. I called to him, "Are you hurt badly, Jock?" but no answer. He was dead. A dark red smudge was coming through his tunic right under the heart. The blood ran down his bare knees, making a horrible sight. On his right side he carried his water bottle. I was crazy for a drink and tried to reach this, but for the life of me could not negotiate that four feet. Then I became unconscious. When I woke up I was in an advanced first-aid post. I asked the doctor if we had taken the trench. "We took the trench and the wood beyond, all right," he said, "and you fellows did your bit; but, my lad, that was thirty-six hours ago. You were lying in No Man's Land in that hell hole for a day and a half. It's a wonder you are alive." He also told me that out of the twenty that were in the raiding party, seventeen were killed. The officer died of wounds in crawling back to our trench and I was severely wounded, but one fellow returned without a scratch, without any prisoners. No doubt this chap was the one who had sneezed and improperly cut the barbed wire.

In the official communiqué our trench raid was described as follows:

"All quiet on the western front, excepting in the neighborhood of Gompécourt wood, where one of our raiding parties penetrated into the German lines."

It is needless to say that we had no use for our persuaders or come-alongs, as we brought back no prisoners, and until I die Old Pepper's words, "Personally I don't believe that that part of the German trench is occupied," will always come to me when I hear some fellow trying to get away with a silly statement. I will judge it accordingly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Blighly.

From this first-aid post, after inoculating me with antitetanus serum to prevent lockjaw, I was put into an ambulance and sent to a temporary hospital behind the lines. To reach this hospital we had to go along a road about five miles in length. This road was under shell fire, for now and then a flare would light up the sky—a tremendous explosion—and then the road seemed to tremble. We did not mind, though no doubt some of us wished that a shell would hit us and end our misery. Personally, I was not particular. It was nothing but bump, jolt, rattle, and bang.

Several times the driver would turn around and give us a "Cheerio, mates, we'll soon be there—" fine fellows, those ambulance drivers, a lot of them go West, too.

We gradually drew out of the fire zone and pulled up in front of an immense dugout. Stretcher-bearers carried me down a number of steps to



In "Blighly."

placed me on a white table in a brightly lighted room.

A sergeant of the Royal Army Medical corps removed my bandages and cut off my tunic. Then the doctor, with his sleeves rolled up, took charge. He winked at me and I winked back and then he asked, "How do you feel, smashed up a bit?"

I answered: "I'm all right, but I'd give a quid for a drink of Bass."

He nodded to the sergeant, who disappeared, and I was darned if he didn't return with a glass of ale. I could only open my mouth about a quarter of an inch, but I got away with every drop of that ale. It tasted just like Blighly, and that is heaven to Tommy.

The doctor said something to an orderly, the only word I could catch was "chloroform," then they put some kind of an arrangement over my nose and mouth and it was me for dreamland. When I opened my eyes I was lying on a stretcher in a low wooden building. Everywhere I looked I saw rows of Tommies on stretchers, some dead to the world, and the rest with fags in their mouths.

The main topic of their conversation was Blighly. Nearly all had a grin on their faces, except those who didn't have enough face left to grin with. I grinned with my right eye, the other was bandaged.

Stretcher-bearers came in and began to carry the Tommies outside. You could hear the chug of the engines in the waiting ambulances.

I was put into an ambulance with three others and away we went for an eighteen-mile ride.

I was on a bottom stretcher. The lad right across from me was smashed up something horrible.

Right above me was a man from the Royal Irish rifles, fellie across from him was a Scotchman.

We had gone about three miles when I heard the death-rattle in the throat of the man opposite. He had gone to rest across the Great Divide. I think at the time I envied him.

The man of the Royal Irish rifles had had his left foot blown off, the jolting of the ambulance over the rough road had loosened up the bandages on his foot, and had started it bleeding again. This blood ran down the side of the stretcher and started dripping. I was lying on my back, too weak to move, and the dripping of this blood got me in my unbandaged right eye. I closed my eye and pretty soon could not open the lid; the blood had congealed and closed it, as if it were glued down.

An English girl dressed in khaki was driving the ambulance, while beside her on the seat was a corporal of the R. A. M. C. They kept up a running conversation about Blighly which almost wrecked my nerves; pretty soon from the stretcher above me, the Irishman became aware of the fact that the bandage from his foot had become loose; it must have pained him horribly, because he yelled in a loud voice:

"If you don't stop this bloody death wagon and fix this d— bandage on my foot, I will get out and walk."

The girl on the seat turned around and in a sympathetic voice asked, "Poor fellow, are you very badly wounded?"

The Irishman, at this question, let out a howl of indignation and answered, "Am I very badly wounded, what bloody cheek; no, I'm not wounded, I've only been kicked by a canny bird."

The ambulance immediately stopped, and the corporal came to the rear and fixed him up, and also washed out my right eye. I was too weak to thank him, but it was a great relief. Then I must have become unconscious, because when I regained my senses, the ambulance was at a standstill, and my stretcher was being removed from it.

It was night, lanterns were flashing here and there, and I could see stretcher-bearers hurrying to and fro. Then I was carried into a hospital train.

The inside of this train looked like heaven to me, just pure white, and we met our first Red Cross nurses; we thought they were angels. And they were.

Nice little soft bunks and clean, white sheets.

A Red Cross nurse sat beside me during the whole ride which lasted three hours. She was holding my wrist; I thought I had made a hit, and tried to tell her how I got wounded, but she would put her finger to her lips and say, "Yes, I know, but you mustn't talk now, try to go to sleep, it'll do you good, doctor's orders." Later on I learned that she was taking my pulse every few minutes, as I was very weak

from the loss of blood and they expected me to snuff it, but I didn't.

From the train we went into ambulances for a short ride to the hospital ship Panama. Another palace and more angels. I don't remember the trip across the channel.

I opened my eyes; I was being carried on a stretcher through lanes of people, some cheering, some waving flags, and others crying. The flags were Union Jacks, I was in Southampton. Blighly at last. My stretcher was strewn with flowers, cigarettes, and chocolates. Tears started to run down my cheek from my good eye. I like a booby was crying. Can you beat it?

Then into another hospital train, a five-hour ride to Paignton, another ambulance ride, and then I was carried into Munsey ward of the American Women's War hospital and put into a real bed.

This real bed was too much for my unstrung nerves and I fainted.

When I came to, a pretty Red Cross nurse was bending over me, bathing my forehead with cold water, then she left and the ward orderly placed a screen around my bed, and gave me a much-needed bath and clean pajamas. Then the screen was removed and a bowl of steaming soup was given me. It tasted delicious.

Before finishing my soup the nurse came back to ask me my name and number. She put this information down in a little book and then asked:

"Where do you come from?" I answered:

"From the big town behind the Statue of Liberty," upon hearing this she started jumping up and down, clapping her hands, and calling out to three nurses across the ward:

"Come here, girls—at last we have got a real live Yankee with us."

They came over and besieged me with questions, until the doctor arrived. Upon learning that I was an American he almost crushed my hand in his grip of welcome. They also were Americans, and were glad to see me.

The doctor very tenderly removed my bandages and told me, after viewing my wounds, that he would have to take me to the operating theater immediately. Personally I didn't care what was done with me.

In a few minutes, four orderlies who looked like undertakers dressed in white, brought a stretcher to my bed and placing me on it carried me out of the ward, across a courtyard to the operating room or "pictures," as Tommy calls it.

I don't remember having the anesthetic applied.

When I came to I was again lying in a bed in Munsey ward. One of the nurses had draped a large American flag over the head of the bed, and clasped in my hand was a smaller flag, and it made me feel good all over to again see the "Stars and Stripes."

At that time I wondered when the boys in the trenches would see the emblem of the "Land of the free and the home of the brave" beside them, doing its bit in this great war of civilization.

My wounds were very painful, and several times at night I would dream that myriads of khaki-clad figures would pass my bed and each would stop, bend over me, and whisper, "The best of luck, mate."

Soaked with perspiration I would awake with a cry, and the night nurse would come over and hold my hand. This awakening got to be a habit with me until that particular nurse was transferred to another ward.

In three weeks' time, owing to the careful treatment received, I was able to sit up and get my bearings. Our ward contained seventy-five patients, 60 per cent of which were surgical cases. At the head of each bed hung a temperature chart and diagnosis sheet. Across this sheet would be written "G. S. W." or "S. W.," the former meaning gun shot wound and the latter shell wound. The "S. W." predominated, especially among the Royal Field artillery and Royal engineers.

About forty different regiments were represented, and many arguments ensued as to the respective fighting ability of each regiment. The rivalry was wonderful. A Jock arguing with an Irishman, then a strong Cockney accent would butt in in favor of a London regiment. Before long a Welshman, followed by a member of a Yorkshire regiment, and, perhaps, a Canadian intrude themselves and the argument waxed loud and furious. The patients in the beds start howling for them to settle their dispute outside and the ward is in an uproar. The head sister comes along and with a wave of the hand completely routs the doughty warriors and again silence reigns supreme.

Wednesday and Sunday of each week were visiting days and were looked forward to by the men, because they meant parcels containing fruit, sweets or fags. When a patient had a regular visitor, he was generally kept well supplied with these delicacies. Great jealousy is shown among the men as to their visitors and many word wars ensue after the visitors leave.

When a man is sent to a convalescent home, he generally turns over his steady visitor to the man in the next bed.

Most visitors have autograph albums and bore Tommy to death by asking him to write the particulars of his wounding in same. Several Tommies try to duck this unpleasant job by telling the visitors that they cannot write, but this never phases the owner of the album; he or she, generally she, offers to write it for them and Tommy is stung into telling his experiences.

The questions asked Tommy by visitors would make a clever joke book to a military man.

Some kindly looking old lady will

stop at your bed and in a sympathetic voice address you: "You poor boy, wounded by those terrible Germans. You must be suffering frightful pain. A bullet, did you say? Well, tell me, I have always wanted to know, did it hurt worse going in or coming out?" Tommy generally replies that he did not stop to figure it out when he was hit.

(Continued.)



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